

committee, and we agreed that there should be a short-term extension to ensure continuity in State programs and to live up to our obligation to the American people to provide a world-class—in fact, the best—transportation system.

That is what these trust fund moneys are all about. I supported this short-term approach as a last resort. But I was under the assumption that leadership here would allow us to move the surface transportation bill to the floor so that we could begin working on it as soon as we returned from the recess. This has to happen. It was supposed to be one of the first things we brought up when we got back here.

The surface transportation bill made the States partners with the Federal Government. With this highway bill, we had more of a partnership than we had ever had before. The partnership was to build a stronger transportation system and to maintain a stronger transportation system. We are leaving the departments of transportation in all States in the lurch by putting off work for months now. This is no way to treat a partner. If we are truly partners with the States, their departments of transportation, then certainly we should be moving this legislation.

State transportation programs are continuing for the moment, but let's not kid ourselves. These programs are dying. They are on life support, but they are dying. We designed the short-term extension in a way that we would, in effect, force ourselves to work on this legislation after we came back after the first of the year. We are not following through on that. Our goal was to allow the States to spend unallocated balances for a couple of months to prevent a lapse in the programs. We didn't build an extra quarter or 6 months into that idle time.

I congratulate and I applaud Senator BYRD, the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, who has been on this floor and steadfastly and continually and very effectively has brought to the attention of this body and the people of this country the need that we move to (and pass) the surface transportation bill. The closer we get to the election the harder it is going to be to do the right thing in regard to this legislation. If we wait until April, April is going to become July, and then July will become October. We should do this now. We should move this bill as quickly as possible.

There are some States, including the State of Nevada, where we are limited in terms of the amount of funds we can allocate because of bid-letting procedures. There are only certain times that we can let these contracts—sometimes because of weather in parts of the State of Nevada. As I have already described, because of the weather extremes, you cannot do work all year round in the State of Nevada. So we need to let these bids take place. As I have indicated, there are many parts of Nevada, in the high Sierras and other

parts of the State of Nevada, where the construction season is extremely short. Delays in reauthorization are going to lead to delays in roadbuilding and maintenance soon. A delay of several months can easily lead to a delay of a year or more in the colder climates of our State.

This applies all over the country. Nevada is currently the fastest growing State in the Nation. As I indicated, about 8,000 people moved to Clark County last month—that's the Las Vegas area. In order to address our long-term growth-related infrastructure needs, we need a 6-year bill; not a 3-month bill, not a 6-month bill. Six-month bills do not allow us to adequately plan for the future. It is unfair of this body, this Congress, to arbitrarily wreck the planning processes of 50 States and tens of thousands of highway construction workers and contractors whose livelihood depends on the timely and consistent flow of these highway funds. We must move forward. To not do so is simply unfair. It is unfair for the Congress of this country to hold up the gas taxes that the people pay every time they fill up their tanks at a service station while we continue collecting these huge sums of money every day to go into this trust fund. We are not being fair to the American public by not spending these trust funds.

We spend a lot of time in this body talking about States rights. Let's demonstrate our commitment to States by passing this highway bill. It is important we do it. It is important we do it tomorrow, not next month or the month after that. Let's get to work on reauthorization today.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mr. KENNEDY. Will the Senator yield for a unanimous consent request?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I will.

#### PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR—S. 1601

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that two fellows in my office, Ellen Gadbois and Diane Robertson, be granted the privilege of the floor during Senate consideration of the cloning legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. Will the distinguished Senator yield for a question?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Yes, I certainly will.

Mr. BYRD. Will the Senator object to my asking consent that I be recognized, after the distinguished Senator from California speaks, for not to exceed 20 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Hearing none, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the distinguished Senator and I thank the Chair.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak in morning business. I understand I have 10 minutes by the

unanimous consent agreement of Senator REID.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

#### DROP IN COCAINE SEIZURES ON THE SOUTHWEST BORDER

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, Congress has increased the priority of the war on drugs in recent years. We've allocated nearly \$300 million in additional funds to the U.S. Customs Service since 1996.

And I think all of us know that the Southwest Border is still, without question, ground zero in U.S. drug interdiction efforts, with more than 70% of the cocaine and other narcotics entering this country across the 2,000 mile stretch of border between our country and Mexico.

To meet this threat Congress authorized more than \$100 million over the last two years to add 650 inspectors and employ state of the art technologies along the Southwest border. The President's budget in fiscal year 1999 calls for an additional \$104 million for Southwest Border narcotics efforts.

So you can imagine my surprise when I opened yesterday's edition of the Los Angeles Times to read the following:

The amount of cocaine seized at the commercial ports of entry along the U.S./Mexico border plummeted 84% in 1997, forcing U.S. Customs Service officials to develop a new drug fighting strategy and leaving them concerned about a backlash in Congress.

Well, Mr. President there is a backlash from this United States Senator because for five and a half years now I have sounded a constant drumbeat on Treasury and on Customs to stop the mixed missions of the Customs Department and understand that there is a major problem with cocaine coming across the Southwest Border. Frankly an 84% drop in seizures last year indicates that all of the money and all of the personnel we have been pumping in has simply not done the job. 84% at the Southwest border, and cocaine seizures are down 15% across the nation.

If someone could tell me the reason for the drop is because, overall, there is less cocaine coming into the country—I'd say, congratulations, our efforts have been successful.

But that doesn't appear to be the case. Narcotics intelligence officials continue to warn that an estimated 5 to 7 tons of cocaine enters this country every single day of the year. We are just not getting it.

If someone could tell me that the drop along the Southwest Border is because our efforts have been so successful, that the drug smugglers are going elsewhere—I'd say bravo, the taxpayers' money has been well spent.

But, again, that does not appear to be the case. Customs officials are widely quoted in news reports saying the problem is that the drug traffickers continue to stay two steps ahead of our interdiction efforts. And in fact, that is the case.